



Oak Marr Market is Open for Business

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The Oak Marr farmer's market had its first day open on June 10, and market manager Nick Nahas says that despite the pandemic, the first few weeks of the market have been a success with more than 200 people attending each Wednesday.

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NEWS

Use of Force Rises in 2019

Disproportionate treatment of African Americans recorded in every police district in the county.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

While Black people are less than 10 percent of the Fairfax County population (9.7 percent), they are the targets for use of force by police 46.53 percent of the time. Incidents of police use of force rose from 510 incidents in 2018 to 594 in 2019. Fairfax County Police released its published data on Monday, June 22.

This year, police published use of force data in each police district for the first time. Every police district reported disproportionate use of force against Black community members.

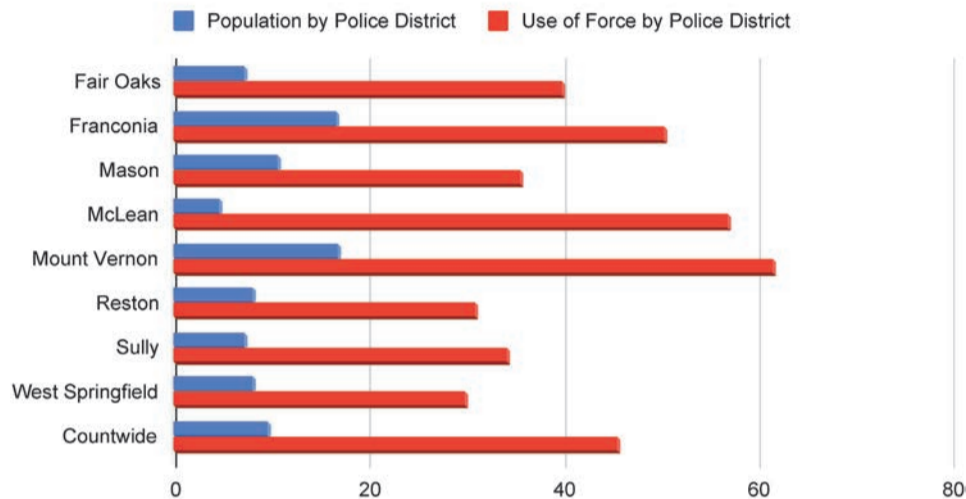
Mount Vernon, McLean and Franconia police districts had the most disproportionate statistics.

In the Mount Vernon District, police used force against Black people 61.72 percent of the time; the population of the Mount Vernon District is 16.94 Black. The Mount Vernon District is where Officer Tyler Timberlake used his taser multiple times on a Black man who did not appear to be a threat on June 5 in Gum Springs. Timberlake has been charged with three counts of assault.

In the McLean district, where African American community members account for fewer than one in 20 (4.69 percent), they were the subject of police force 57.02 percent of the time.

In the Franconia police district, force was

Black People as a Percentage of...



used against Black people more than half the time, 50.66 percent, even though Black people account for only 16.76 percent of the area population.

ALL POLICE DISTRICTS, alphabetically:

Fair Oaks, 40 percent use of force against Black people, who are 7.22 percent of the population;

Franconia, 50.55 percent use of force against Black people, who are 16.76 percent of the population;

Mason, 35.64 percent use of force against Black people, who are 10.80 percent of the population;

McLean, 57.02 percent use of force against Black people, who are 4.69 percent of the population;

Mount Vernon, 61.72 percent use of force against Black people, who are 16.94 percent of the population;

Reston, 31.03 percent use of force against Black people, who are 8.24 percent of the population;

Sully, 34.25 percent use of force against Black people, who are 7.3 percent of the population;

West Springfield, 30 percent use of force against Black people, who are 8.1 percent of the population.

THE MOST INCIDENTS of use of force, 87, were in each of the McLean and Mason police districts; police resorted to use of force in the Mount Vernon police district 86 times.

In the entire county, a pointed firearm accounted for 396 of the 1,632 times use of force was used (multiple kinds of force were used in the 594 cases), force to hold in 255 incidents, take down 229 times, and force to cuff 206 times. Use of force includes use of weapons, use of pepper spray, strikes with hands or feet, taser weapons, canine, and more.

In 2018, African American community members were targets of police force 48.6 percent of the time.

The implemented recommendations of the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, to which FCPD leadership agreed, call for collection and release of more detailed data than has been made available: "Collect data, and publish an annual statistical report, covering all stops, frisks, citations, arrests, and use-of force by district station and magisterial district - include the race, gender, and ethnicity of the individual involved and note whether the suspect is homeless and/or if a mental health crisis is a factor. Document the outcome of each incident and regularly report the collected data to the BOS and the public and post the data online."

"This data is troubling, and we certainly have work to do," said Chairman Jeff McKay. "I also asked the Police Chief to provide a timeline to the Board for the release and publication of all FCPD police stops (to include traffic citations, traffic stops, and arrests). ... Our goal must be increased transparency moving forward."

Remote or In-School Learning

County families should respond by July 10.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

School reopens for Fairfax County Public Schools students in eight weeks. That means, families in the 10th largest school division in the United States, have until Friday, July 10, to respond with their enrollment choice for the entire 2020-21 school year. Their options are four-day remote learning or two-day socially distanced in-school learning. The deadline allows the County time to plan for the virtual and in-person class schedules. County teachers will also be surveyed for their return-to-school preferences.

At the June 23 Fairfax County School Board, Work Session, Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand said, "We have heard you. You have asked for additional flexibility for students and families, and we are providing that today. You asked for additional flexibility for our teachers,



Fairfax County Schools Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand.

and we are providing that today... We hope again to better accommodate our families because of this flexibility... The increased flexibility will allow more students online... Hopefully, as we get more kids to do virtual, we will be able to increase the number of days for face-for face interactions."

According to Fairfax County Public Schools, in Choice One, students participate in full-time remote learning for the academic year, regardless of any changes to the schools' operational status.

THE COUNTY would provide virtual interactive instruction four days per week and asynchronous education one day per week. To the extent possible, elementary and middle school students would be served by dedicated online Fairfax County School teachers in a cohort model with other students from their school, region, or the division. High school students would be served through Online Campus courses, Virtual Virginia courses and specialized course instruction from dedicated online Fairfax County School staff. However, families must understand the need to support their child's active participation in all online learning activities on the established schedule. According to the Fairfax County Public Schools website, parents would need to work with the division to

arrange for their students to participate in state assessments and other mandated educational activities.

Choice Two is at least two full days of in-school learning weekly with students engaged in independent study and work on the days they are not in the school building. This option aligns with the predominant model for instructional delivery under Phase 3 of state guidance. It allows for health and social distancing protocols to protect students and staff per current CDC and VDH guidance.

According to the Fairfax County School Board website: "When in the building, six-foot separation is maintained whenever possible, to apply to both staff and students, and efforts are in place to limit mixing groups of students. Buses will enact new capacity limits and seating guidelines, per health and safety expectations."

SEE BACK TO SCHOOL, PAGE 7

Public Demands Changes, Not Studies and Delays

Virginia Senate Democratic Caucus Police Reform and Criminal Justice Equity Plan.

The deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor has awoken Americans and Virginians to long standing problems in policing in America. After people are arrested additional damage is done by a criminal justice system that has been streamlined to produce convictions and punishment instead of rehabilitation and justice. The Senate Democratic Caucus has led and is continuing to conduct a series of community conversations to discuss these issues and we have heard from the public that now is not the time for studies or delay and that changes must be made during our Special Session. Many states have already enacted comprehensive policing reform measures in the wake of these events. Others already have measures in place. Many Virginia localities already have these measures in place as well, and some of this legislation has been considered in prior sessions.

The list below represents a series of distinct policy proposals that the Senate Democratic Caucus believes can be taken up, considered and passed during the special session in August. We will continue to take public input and work with stakeholders, the House of Delegates, state agencies, and Governor Northam to refine these measures over the next 60 days.

We cannot achieve true equity unless we address the entire Criminal Justice System and not solely policing. Further, we note that this is a problem that permeates beyond the criminal justice system and will require legislative action beyond this scope. In the absence of universal pre-K, quality schools, a path to economic equity, affordable healthcare, affordable and quality housing, and food access, we will not be able to close the many paths that lead to the criminal system pipeline.

1. Bringing Equity to Virginia Policing
 - ❖ Prohibit No Knock Warrants (Breonna Taylor)
 - ❖ Ban Sex With Individuals Arrested by Law Enforcement*
 - ❖ Prohibit Hiring of Officers Fired or Resigned During Use of Force Investigations
 - ❖ Create a Decertification Procedure for Law Enforcement Officers*
 - ❖ Ban chokeholds and strangleholds (George Floyd)
 - ❖ Require Attempts at De-escalation Prior to Use of Force
 - ❖ Require Warnings Before Shots Fired
 - ❖ Require Law Enforcement to Exhaust All Other Means Prior to Shooting
 - ❖ Create Duty to Intervene by Fellow Law Enforcement Officers
 - ❖ Prohibit Shooting at Moving Motor Vehicles
 - ❖ Require Departments to Create a Use of Force Continuum
 - ❖ Require Comprehensive Reporting by All

Law Enforcement Agencies Including Use of Force Data

- ❖ Defelonize Assault on Law Enforcement Officer (Return to Misdemeanor Offense)
- ❖ Cancel HB599 Funding (Virginia supplemental funding for local police departments) After Local Police Have Disproportionate Use of Force Incidents In their Jurisdiction

2. Expand Local Authority to Respond to Mental Health and Regulate Law Enforcement

- ❖ Create Local Authority for a Marcus Alert System - System to Report Acute Mental Health Crises
- ❖ Create Local Option for Citizen Review Board Empowered to Investigate, Fire and/or Discipline Officers

3. Restore Courts' and Prosecutors' Flexibility to Effect Mercy

- ❖ Confirm Prosecutors' Authority to Drop Charges*
- ❖ Enhance Courts' Ability to Expunge Charges for Dismissed Charges, Substance Convictions and Pardoned Offenses*

4. Reduce Racial Profiling Opportunities for Law Enforcement

- ❖ Prohibit Searches of Person or Vehicle Based on Odor of Marijuana Without Probable Cause for Other Offenses*
- ❖ Prohibit Stops for Equipment Violations Not Covered by State Vehicle Inspection
- ❖ Secondary Offense For Dangling Objects, Extinguished Tag Light, Tinted Windows or Loud Exhaust

5. Restore Equity to the Sentencing Process

- ❖ Jury Sentencing Only at Option of the Accused*
- ❖ Eliminate Commonwealth's Right to Demand Jury Trial When Jury Trials Suspended for State of Emergency*
- ❖ Require Agencies to Determine Cost Savings for Introduced Criminal Justice Legislation

6. Restore Equity to the Virginia Prison System

- ❖ Allow Earned Sentence Credit for Good Behavior During Prison*
- ❖ Create Discretion for Compassionate Release for Terminally Ill or Permanently Disabled Prisoners*

7. COVID Relief

- ❖ Virginia Rental Assistance Fund for Families Economically Impacted by COVID
 - ❖ Require & Reimburse Localities for Postage Prepaid Envelopes for Absentee Voting*
- * Represents Legislation Introduced in Prior Sessions

Reform Is Also a Long Term Process

There are other measures that are being studied and considered for the 2021 General Session that were introduced, are under study, and were too complex for the shortened special session including:

- ❖ Restoration of Parole
- ❖ Decoupling Charging and Conviction Decisions from Commonwealth Attorney Funding
- ❖ Public Defender Pay Equity
- ❖ Expanding Public Defender Offices to Additional Jurisdictions
- ❖ Elimination of Mandatory Minimum Sentences

The Senate Democratic Caucus has led in the area of Criminal Justice Reform for years and we look forward to working with the Governor and the House of Delegates to collaboratively enact these policies. Last year, many Senate criminal justice reform bills passed the Senate last year but were not presented to the Governor including:

- ❖ Elimination of jury sentencing [Morrissey, SB 811],
- ❖ Prohibiting imposition of death penalty to person with severe mental illness [Favola, SB 116],
- ❖ Defelonizing third offense petit larceny [Morrissey, SB 807],
- ❖ Allow jury to recommend leniency [Deeds, SB 326],
- ❖ Ban sexual relations between officers and arrested persons [Marsden, SB 242],
- ❖ Require judges to explain failure to use of recommended evidence-based non-incarceration sentencing alternatives [Surovell, SB 438],
- ❖ Reinstate prosecutors and judges' authority to reduce/drop charges upon terms and conditions [Surovell, SB 489],
- ❖ Allowing court appointed defendants to seek expert witness assistance on an ex parte basis without involvement of prosecutors [Morrissey, SB 806]
- ❖ Compassionate release of permanently disabled prisoners [Bell, SB 493],
- ❖ Compassionate release of terminally ill prisoners [Bell, SB 493],
- ❖ Expunge marijuana/alcohol/tobacco charges dismissed per successful rehabilitation program completion [McDougle, SB 517],
- ❖ Require Virginia Sentencing Commission recommendations to be published to juries before sentencing [Morrissey, SB 810],
- ❖ Reduce maximum sentence for robberies without physical injuries from life to terms of years, [Morrissey, SB 805],
- ❖ Expunge marijuana/tobacco/alcohol/fake ID convictions occurring before age 21 [McDougle, SB 517],
- ❖ Expunge convictions pardoned by Governor [Norment, SB 608],
- ❖ Defelonize consensual sexting between minors [Surovell, SB 440].

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The Oak Marr Market is Open

BY MALLORY CULHANE
THE CONNECTION

The Oak Marr farmer's market in Oakton opened up on June 10 after being closed for several weeks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Customers and vendors alike are happy to be able to get back to the market each week after a late start to the season.

"In the past everything was very smooth, we had a set pattern and everybody knew where their spot was and this year is obviously totally different," said Nick Nahas, the manager of the Oak Marr market. In his third year as a manager, Nahas says that nothing in the past has affected the market as much as the pandemic has.

The Oak Marr market has established several new safety precautions in accordance with the Fairfax County Park Authority's farmers market guidelines to keep both vendors and customers safe. Each vendor's table is spaced out to allow for social distancing between both vendors and customers, and despite the added space, Oak Marr still has the same number of vendors as years past. There's also designated entry and exit spaces and a one-way path.

Oak Marr, along with other Fairfax County farmers markets, typically opens in May. The late opening had some effects on vendors, particularly farms that sell fresh produce, and couldn't get out their products earlier in the season.

"We didn't move as much product as we usually do in the spring such as our strawberries and leafy greens and root veggies because the market hadn't opened yet," said Dana Boyle, manager of Garner's Produce, a

family owned farm located in Westmoreland County. In absence of farmers markets, Boyle says that Garner's took advantage of their roadside market to move produce along.

Other vendors had to shift their sales in the last few weeks to make up for lost market revenue – like The Fermented Pig, a local specialty food business that sells charcuterie and handmade bacon.

"The absence of markets certainly hurt our farmers market business but we pivoted more toward delivery to meet people's needs during the crisis," said Joshua Plante, founder of The Fermented Pig. "We are fortunate in that we set out two years ago to be an internet business, so when the crisis hit, we already had a very effective website [and] were able to start taking those orders right away."

Vendors also mention inconsistencies in guidelines between the Virginia Farmers Market Association and local authorities – such as wearing gloves – which made the initial reopening difficult and confusing.

Despite the late opening and the threat of COVID-19 still in Fairfax, Nahas says the crowd has been steady with roughly 260 people each Wednesday since their first market on June 10. Vendors say that many of their customers are eager to be back and shopping at the market.

"Everybody's happy to be there," said Brandon Berryhill, the owner of The Traveling Shepherd Coffee. "The people that work there are very apologetic to me because they feel like I'm not busy enough but I feel like I'm actually ahead of the curve of what my projections were. People are getting back to their regular routines – getting confident and comfortable."



PHOTOS BY MALLORY CULHANE/THE CONNECTION

Emilee Steenem, an employee of The Fermented Pig, waits for her next customers as the Oak Marr market opens up at 8 a.m.



Brandon Berryhill, the owner of The Traveling Shepherd Coffee, takes advantage of the space in his car and stores coffee canisters, cups, straws, and other items in the trunk.

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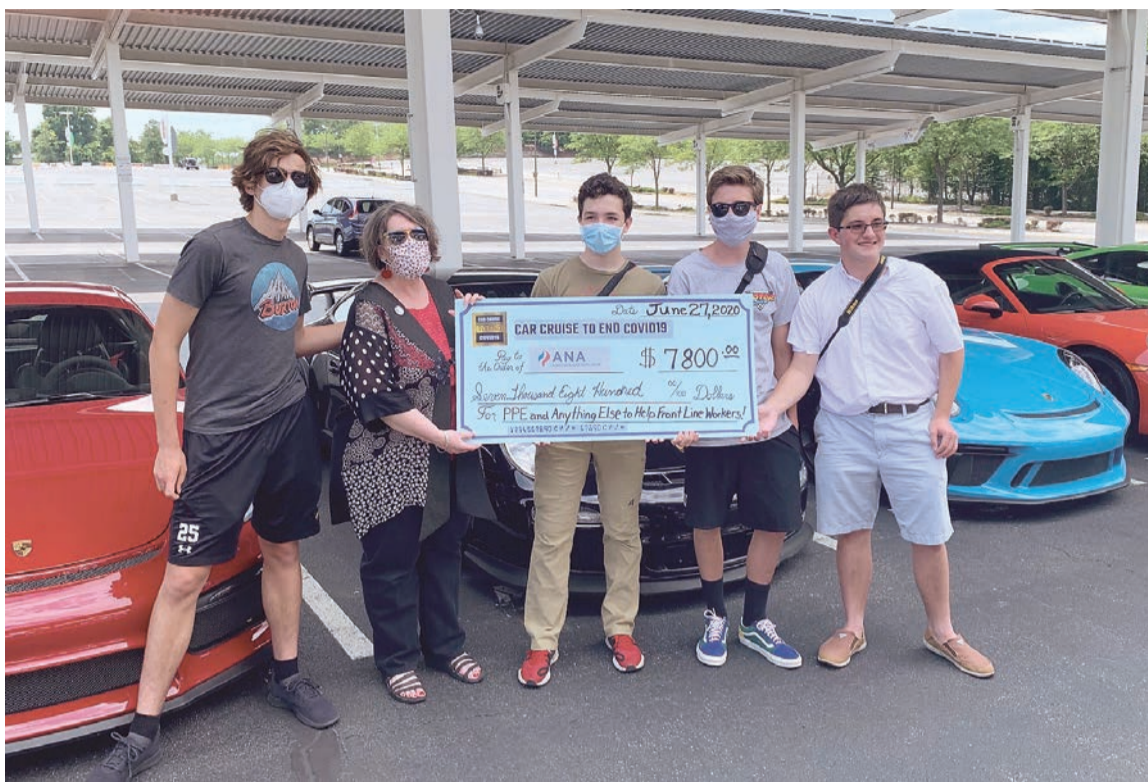
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

NEWS



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Four organizers of the Car Cruise to End COVID-19 (Andrew Morin of McLean, Eric Mical of Laurel, Tommy Zavrel of Great Falls, and Peter Hayes of Fredericksburg) present a check to Karen Schofield-Lecca of the American Nurses Association at FedExField.

Teens Rally to End COVID-19

Area teenagers organize the Car Cruise to End COVID-19 raising \$7800 for the American Nurses Association.

BY JESSICA FENG
THE CONNECTION

In April, Andrew Morin, Eric Mical, Tommy Zavrel, and Peter Hayes, all between 16 to 17 years old, started organizing the Car Cruise to End COVID-19. The car cruise raised donations for the American Nurses Association (ANA) and attracted roughly 150 cars and 300 people from across the DMV area and beyond.

The idea for the event first started when the teens noticed an issue with funding for nurses. Zavrel recalls that Mical suggested a car show and the pair discussed and arrived at the idea of a car cruise.

"We thought 'hey, nurses need help' and these car cruises are already socially distant by nature because everyone's in their own car... So we decided to

make it for charity."

In order to register, drivers were required to donate to the ANA website. Zavrel says the car cruise raised \$7800 in total, which was presented to the vice president of the organization at the end.

"People went on the website and made a donation on behalf of a company (the name of the cruise). Then they just took a screenshot of the little receipt they got and just showed that to us."

Zavrel recounts that the car cruise route had to be changed multiple times because of the size of the crowd and traffic generated.

"We first wanted to end it on Gibson Island in Maryland but that didn't work because it got too big and we wouldn't even fit on the island...The greatest obstacle was just keeping up with the number of people that wanted to come."

Ultimately, Zavrel says the Car Cruise to End COVID-19 reached its goal to raise money for a problem he and his friends noticed.

"We just wanted a way to bring the community together and we wanted to help out the nurses."



Cars along a small section of the over 100-mile-cruise en route. Organizers started planning the car cruise in April and garnered about 200 donations.

"We just wanted a way to bring the community together and we wanted to help out the nurses."
— Tommy Zavrel of Great Falls

NEWS

Safe Community Coalition to Launch Peer-to-Peer Coaching Program

The Safe Community Coalition is sponsoring a student-led, pilot peer-to-peer coaching program for high school and college students. The pilot program will train 10 high school and college students to facilitate circles with four or five of their peers. Ten peer circles will launch virtually in mid-July and run through early August. SCC is looking for students to join the circles. This is a great leadership development opportunity and will deepen problem-solving, teamwork, inquiry, empathy, and reflective skills.

Circles will use a proven, structured peer coaching method to help circle members with their current challenges, questions, or priorities. Each week a person in the circle will raise their issue of concern and everyone will help them. Each circle will meet four times in July-August for 60-90 minutes.

WeCoach is solely students helping students using a structured problem-solving, peer coaching approach.

The concept for the pilot was hatched by two brothers in our area (one a rising senior at Marshall High School and the other a student at Northern Virginia Community College) who wanted to do something to help kids navigate through the pandemic, and their mom, who is a leader development professional and certified coach. SCC volunteers are supporting the pilot.

If you or somebody you know is a high school junior/senior or college student interested in participating in a circle, contact Adriano at 703-477-4254 or Camillo at 703-401-8471. *Deadline is July 1st* If you are a parent and would like more info, call Valerie Lingeman, at 202-276-6116 or email at valerie@doublehelixlearning.com.

Back to School

FROM PAGE 3

"I'm trying to think of how we can manage some of the expectations and wanting to protect us from impossible asks... Time is what I'm more concerned about," said Fairfax County School Board Member At-Large Abrar Omeish during the June 23 work session.

IN BOTH CHOICES, one day would be set aside for teacher planning and intervention support for some students. Special Education students and English Language Learners would receive more in-person or synchronous instruction. "I think it's important to keep in mind our students with disabilities are served in very different settings across the district...There isn't going to be a one size fits all," said Teresa Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Services. Additional details about Reopening of School plans are available online.

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Mourning, Afternoon and Evening



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

We had to euthanize Biscuit, our oldest cat on Saturday, June 20th. He would have been 14 on September 20th. Biscuit is survived by his half-brother, Andrew and his two half sisters, Sloane and Twinkle. Biscuit's litter mate and brother, "Chino" preceded him in death in November, 2019, after succumbing to diabetes. Biscuit had likewise been diagnosed with diabetes around the same time as "Chino." However, as occasionally happens, according to Biscuit's veterinarian, some cats "spontaneously" overcome the disease, as Biscuit miraculously did, and go on to live relatively normal lives. Biscuit lived approximately one year after his diabetes went into remission, which ended up being about seven months longer than "Chino." Not exactly 'relatively normal'; nonetheless, we were grateful for the extra seven months.

Biscuit was "the senior man," as we called him and we typically left him in charge of the other four cats when both Dina and I would be away from home. Of all five cats, Biscuit was the most present in our lives. He was also the most social, the most fearless and the most affable/tolerant of all our cats. An indoor cat like our entire herd, Biscuit was most likely to be around and to socialize. He would greet visitors within a few minutes of their arrival and invariably introduce himself by jumping up on the coffee table in front of the couch and staring at the newcomer. He was also the first in line for breakfast and dinner, first in line for treats, and whenever my wife, Dina, made a tuna fish sandwich for lunch, Biscuit was, you guessed it, first in line. Topping out at 15 pounds, somehow he managed to keep his weight down. He was a sweet, adoring and talkative cat and we loved him, and of course, we miss him terribly, especially Dina.

Over the last few years, particularly, Dina and Biscuit had formed a bond. He was her cat, just as "Chino" had been mine. Not that Biscuit ignored me, hardly. But when he made his requests, verbal or otherwise, Dina was almost always the intended requestee. Moreover, as Dina's schedule changed, she became Biscuit's primary caregiver, feeder, litter-box scooper and groomer and more interesting for Biscuit, became the one to let him outside to take in the sights, sounds and smells which enthral cats. She was, on these special occasions, daily of late, his constant companion, which is how they spent his last Saturday morning, together, outside.

What has made Biscuit's passing so difficult is how quickly he declined, always a bad sign, our veterinarian said. Biscuit stopped eating on Friday after barely nibbling on Thursday. He even turned away from treats that I offered him and tuna fish that Dina placed in his bowl. Though still engaged with us, we could see his haunches, and feel his boney spine. He had lost two and half pounds in the last three months. That Friday night, Biscuit had trouble settling down and whimpered off and on through the night. I called the veterinarian first thing Saturday morning and we were fortunate to secure an appointment at 10 am that very morning. Biscuit was clearly struggling and probably even suffering as his zero interest in breakfast confirmed and his sounds not of silence continued.

We didn't want to be selfish this time as we had been with "Chino." We kept him at home far too long before taking him to the veterinarian and have regretted it ever since. We just couldn't let go. We weren't going to make the same mistake with Biscuit. That Saturday, we drove to the animal hospital and dropped Biscuit off to be examined while we waited in the car (per phase 2 rules). Ten minutes or so later, the veterinarian called with her grim assessment: Biscuit was failing and was not going to recover. Through our tears, we then made the decision to end Biscuit's suffering. We took his body home that day and buried him on Monday next to his brother "Chino."

It was a private service attended only by family members.

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



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