

CONNECTION

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It's Freshest and Tastiest At Farmers Markets

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Fairfax Supervisors Didn't Know About Davis History

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(From left) Melodie Stehling, of Centerville, Naturalist with Fairfax County Park Authority, Jamie Wray, Virginia Cooperative Extension, John Lovaas, Co-Market Manager and Eli Smith, 13, welcome in the 2021 Fairfax County Park Authority Reston Farmers Market.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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NEWS

Inside the clinic are (from left) ADAMS President Syed Moktadir, ADAMS Board member Robert Marro, Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Supervisor Walter Alcorn, Dr. Annette Hall-Finney, State Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33), Dr. Sultan Chaudhry, Supervisor John Foust, ACHN Chairman Mahsin Habib and ADAMS member Faateha Syed.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION

Gov. Terry McAuliffe Visits Vaccine Clinic in Chantilly

Bumping elbows and happily chatting with staff and patients alike, Gov Terry McAuliffe visited a COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Chantilly, last Saturday, May 1. Joining him were State Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33) and Fairfax County Supervisors Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill) and John Foust (D-Dranesville).

They were at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) Compassionate Healthcare Network (ACHN) Free Clinic at 4431 Brookfield Corporate Drive, Unit. F. Since February, the clinic has vaccinated thousands of Fairfax County residents. And on Saturday, it administered shots to 156 more.

McAuliffe has been a strong supporter of the ADAMS Clinic since its inception in 2015. In fact, while in office between 2014-18, he visited there several times. And earlier this year, a General Assembly Resolution commended the Clinic for helping uninsured and other Virginia residents with a range of free medical services. These include initial medical care, consultations with ACHN physicians in a wide range of medical specialties, prescription drugs and lab work.

During Saturday's event, ACHN volunteer doctors and staff were on hand to talk with visitors and tell the visiting dignitaries what they do there. It also enabled area residents to learn about the services this free clinic offers and how to become a patient there.



Posing outside the ADAMS Vaccination Clinic in Chantilly are (from left) Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), Gov. Terry McAuliffe and Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill).

— BONNIE HOBBS

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(From left) GMU student Mahir Ahmed received his vaccination from Dr. Derick Hanlan while Gov. Terry McAuliffe gave him the thumbs-up. McAuliffe also gave Ahmed a special governor's coin.

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 7

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.

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

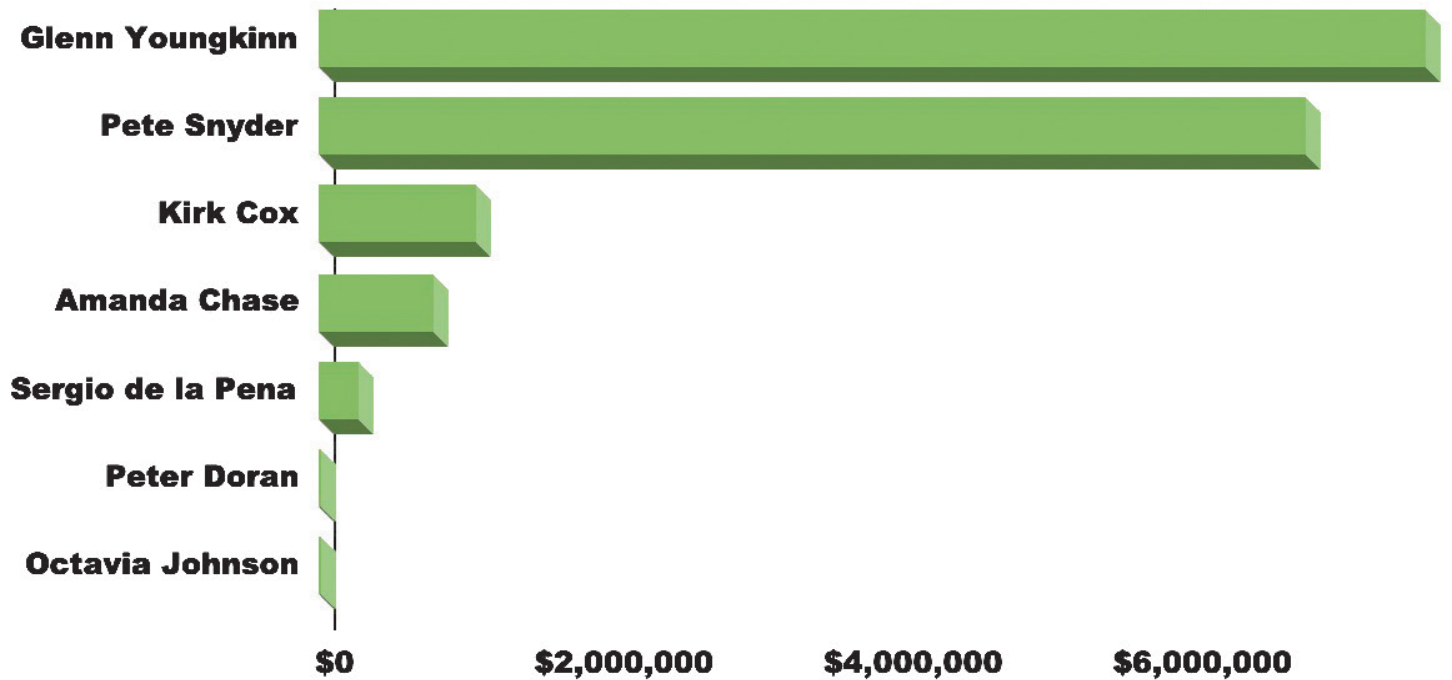
"We've seen a lot of interest in this convention. It's a sign that the two-party system is alive and well."

— 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

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.

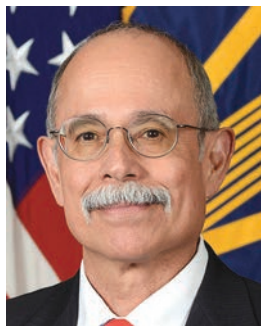
"I will stand up to the pro-abortion radicals," said Cox in a campaign video posted to YouTube. "I will never stop fighting for the promise of life."

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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Amazon Web Services, Inc. seeks candidates for the following (multiple positions available) in Herndon, VA: Professional Services II (Job Code 150.5973.5). Analyze how data from machine learning, data mining, usability studies, and customer feedback can be used to build and deploy security infrastructure and automation. Domestic travel required 50% of the time. Mail CV to: Amazon, PO Box 81226, Seattle, Washington 98108, referencing job code.

SATURDAY/MAY 8

Community Shred Event. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. At Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace Street, Herndon. Get a jump on your spring cleaning. Securely destroy your old papers at this free shred event, sponsored by Herndon Village Network. Limit: Three standard size paper boxes.

SATURDAY/MAY 8

USPS Passport Fair. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Oak Hill Post Office, 13520 McLearen Road, Herndon. To help travelers prepare for international travel, the Oakhill Post Office, located at 13520 McLearen Road, will host a passport fair on Saturday, May 8, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Appointments are not required.

RCC SEEKS ENTERTAINERS FOR RESTON MULTICULTURAL FEST

Reston Community Center is seeking performing arts groups of all ages and cultures for the 21st Annual Reston Multicultural Festival. The festival will be held Saturday, September 25, 2021 at Reston's historic Lake Anne Plaza. Applications will be accepted through June 18, 2021. Interested groups or individuals should fill out an Entertainment Application Form, available on RCC's website: <https://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/attend-shows-events-exhibits/reston-multicultural-festival>

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It's Freshest and Tastiest at Farmers Markets

Local Fairfax County Park Authority Markets open.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The 2021 Fairfax County Park Authority Reston Farmers Market and Herndon Farmers Market recently opened under COVID-19 guidelines. Both offer a dazzling array of local produce, picked right before market and goods not seen in grocery stores.

The Reston Market began its season on May 1, with its traditional bell ringing, this year by Fairfax County employee Naturalist Melodie Stehling of Centreville. "It brings me joy to announce another wonderful 2021 season," she said.

Held Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. through Dec. 4 at the Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT cards are accepted at this location. The Virginia Fresh Match Program matches up to \$20 per market visit for free fruits and veggies. Vendor and pre-sale information will be added as the season continues. Farmer Market Manager John Lovaas reported 2, 221 patrons attended the market's first day.

The Herndon Farmers Market began its season on April 22. The market is held on Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. through



MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

(From left) The Moriarty and DeHaan families of Herndon enjoy a morning at the Herndon Farmers Market, stopping by the vendor booth, Bees of a Feather Farm, located in Great Falls, owned and operated by Carrie Clark.

Nov. 4, and is located in Old Town Herndon in the 700 Block of Lynn St., by the Red Caboose.

Claire Moriarty of Herndon was at the market on April 29. Moriarty said since her children are home-schooled this year, they had time to stop by the market and visit the stand, Bees of a Feather Farm owned and operated by vendor Carrie Clark, her sister.

Visit Farmers Markets | Park Authority for more information.

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.

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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' 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.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Manning the Ellie's Hats booth are (from left) Beckie Reilly; Kim Luckabaugh; founder Jay Coakley; and Carrly, Jilli and Karen Russell.

Fun in the Sun at Casey's Car Show & Spring Fest

Casey Automotive's Fourth Annual Car Show & Spring Fest was Sunday, May 2, in Chantilly. Attendees enjoyed the outdoor event – and it raised \$14,000 for local nonprofit, Ellie's Hats, which provides hats to children with cancer.



Tommy Muntzer, 8, and dad Bryan pose by a Mustang GT 5.0.



Harrison Sherman inspects this 1923 Model T-Bucket Ford owned by Daniel Eno.



Mike Horton stands beside his 1970 Oldsmobile Cutlass.



Mojda and Masoud Al-Majid give this Shelby Cobra 428 two thumbs up.

Facial Recognition as a Legislative Issue

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



One of the side-effects of the global pandemic and the resulting quarantine has been the difficulty of recognizing others after months of not seeing each other in person. There is the normal aging process that can alter our looks, along with little or no access to barbers and stylists, and a decline in interest to apply the usual make-up since no one is going to see you up close. All this can leave others looking quizzically at you with an "I believe I know you" look. Longer hair without additional coloring and a mask covering half your face can make it a challenge sometimes to even recognize our friends.

Facebook has or had a system to alert you if your photo appeared on someone else's page. I have gotten dozens of such messages which when I investigated them found photo of persons who clearly were not me and for which I could find no resemblance. As clever as the technologists were who developed it, the use of facial recognition leaves serious questions about its application, particularly in law enforcement.

The challenges of recognizing even someone you know under today's difficult conditions and the shortcoming of the systems now being used have raised questions about the propriety of collecting large numbers of photos and using them in criminal investigations. In the Washington Metropolitan area there is a little-known program called the National Capital Region Facial Recognition Investigative Leads System that has 1.4 million photos that can be used in criminal investigation but for which civil rights groups have little information.

Concerns about facial recog-

niton technology came to the attention of Virginia legislators last year, and in the recent legislative session we passed a bill signed by the governor to require agencies that plan to use the technology to get specific approval of the legislature. With the high error rate in correctly identifying minorities among its other shortcomings, along with the civil liberties issues it raises, it is unlikely that such approvals are to be forthcoming.

Requests for legislation involving the use of new technologies are most often referred to the Joint Commission on Technology and Science (JCOTS) which was created from legislation I proposed and of which I was chair for many years. Learning about new technologies is always interesting but precautions must be taken when there are issues of civil liberties involved.

JCOTS' usual procedure is to appoint a technical advisory committee that may involve as many as 25 persons from the advocate community, adversaries of the proposals, representatives from academia, and other interested parties to work through the issues involved.

The legislature will not get involved in proprietary issues around a particular technology but instead will involve itself with the civil liberties issues, impact on the community, and trade concerns, among other matters. Regardless of the complexities involved with a technology it is imperative that the legislature provide appropriate safeguards for the community.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Centreville Labor Resource Center Has Workers for Hire

Spring is here, and the Centreville Labor Resource Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Lane in Centreville, is open Monday-Saturday (including Memorial Day), from 6 a.m.-noon. It has people available for hire for landscaping (including patios and other stone and brickwork and drains), construction and carpentry projects, drywall and painting, moving, and cleaning. For more information, and to submit a job request, go to <http://centrevilleimmigrationforum.org/centreville-labor-resource-center/>.