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COVER PHOTO BY *Rebecca D'Angelo*

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The Pamunkey River: Sweet, Sinuous, Southern

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN, 2005

We are creatures of flight. Always have been. Always will be. I think it's a remnant of the persistent evolution that pulsates through every cell of our being, motivating change whether we will it or not. We run from some thing or to some thing, but are never truly sedentary, unless we choose the life of the walking dead.

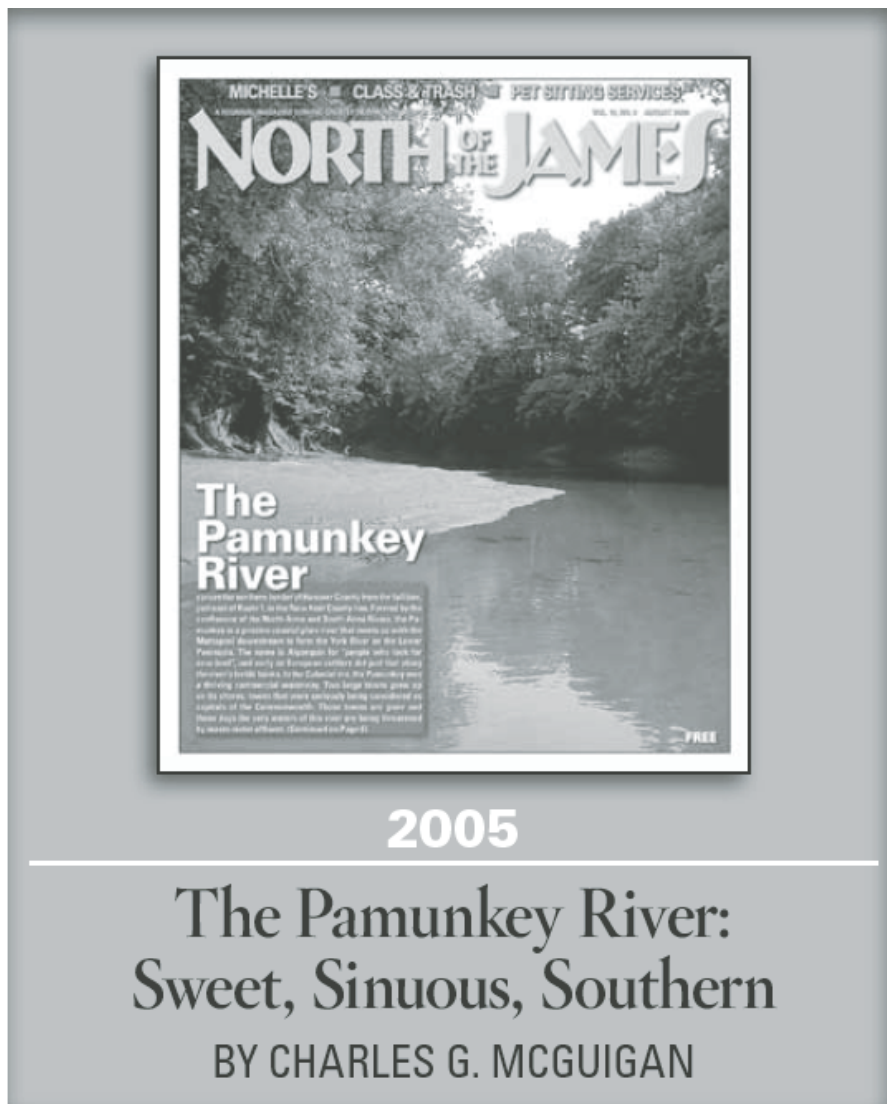
WHICH BRINGS ME to the Pamunkey River—sweet, sinuous, Southern stream—always running from its mountain sources, impatient to pad across the Piedmont, anxious to rejoin the Mother of All Waters, to become one with the tidal bursts of the Chesapeake Bay and the swell of the Atlantic.

Unlike other rivers in Virginia's coastal plain, the Pamunkey is tidal even from its origin at the confluence of the North and South Anna Rivers six miles east of the fall line. It runs to something and away from something twice a day, reversing its own course, flowing downward with its past and relishing the present, which is a jumble of what was and what is to come. That's why I suspect the Pamunkey is somehow always at peace with itself. There is balance in its time continuum.

We put in on the South Anna just below Ashland Roller Mills. At nine in the morning, the temperature's already eighty, and the humidity so thick you could carve it with a buck knife.

Here the water is clear, the bottom sandy and the fish plentiful. To our right bluffs of crumbling granite rise about thirty feet above the water. These bluffs are pocked with caves.

A desperate night ten years ago, six months after my father's death, I stood on those bluffs, howling at the moon until my lungs seemed they would rupture. I sang songs that stretched my vocal chords like rubber bands, and danced along the crumbling granite precipice, a madman in the moonlight, tripping over the roots of the giant mountain laurels, crushing wild ginger under my bare feet. I tipped back a flask of bourbon, downed it in my father's memory, felt lighter than air and could easily have defied gravity, if I had so chosen. That went on until two in the morning, when I finally clawed my way down along the rock face and found a cave where I slept till first light.



When I woke fog lifted off the water like smoke. I was chilled from the night, but the knowledge of water beneath the haze below magnetized me. I dropped like a cannonball from the mouth of the cave and crashed through the surface, almost touching bottom, then bounded up like a bobber, and was swiftly swept downstream to a sand beach.

Later that same morning I caught a two-pound small mouth bass. I honored that fish, prayed over it, sliced through its gills with a fillet knife, severed its head, sliced it from anal fin upward and scraped away the congealing viscera. I built a fire in the cave, a fire of crackling leaves and dried limbs and green branches of mountain laurel that smelled sweet as they smoldered. I held the fish on a forked branch over the flames and cooked it slowly then ate it using my fingers as utensils. No butter, no salt. Just fish,

mountain laurel essence, the water of the river, and a slug of charcoal-flavored bourbon. That night, back home, I slept more soundly than I had in six months.

As the canoe clears the palisades, a creek, raging with waterfalls, empties into the South Anna. Here there's a strong current and it easily carries us downstream, beneath the giant arches of a stone railroad trestle.

The banks suddenly disappear into flat shorelines and the river picks up speed. Round a bend we are spilled into the Pamunkey.

The water from here on down is murky. Fish constantly hit the surface feeding on unfortunate insects as we pull the canoe up onto a wide beach. We eat and drink, our bodies basting in sweat under the baking sun.

Further downstream bluffs again dominate the southern shore. They are made of blue marl and speckled with the white fossil remains of mollusks. We put in to shore and trod across the spongy, clay soil, and I hunker down near an area of wash that is scattered with whole shells, primarily *Turritella*, spiral cones about two inches long. They were deposited here 14 million years ago during the Miocene Epoch, when this entire region of Virginia was under water.

The next day, just below my put in at 301 I see scores of birds. A great blue heron glides in front of me, showing me the way downstream. I see blue buntings, goldfinches and a lone kingfisher. I watch red-throated hummingbirds, five of them, dart among a tangle of trumpet vines, thrusting their needle-like bills into the flowers. They fly backwards, forward, hover, their wings beating so quickly you can't see them, like the spinning blade of an electric fan. When they leave, they are gone like a shot, but I see where they alight on the low branch of a fallen sycamore. A dragonfly, about the same size of the birds, joins them, and the dragonfly keeps moving closer to one of them as if it thinks the bird is one of its own. The hummingbird slashes its beak at the dragonfly, but the dragonfly keeps coming back.

Below Normans Bridge I come upon a clearing and see a small herd of deer, and as soon as they're aware of me they bound for the ring of hardwoods that form a crescent on this open field.

Further downstream, the tide becomes more noticeable. The river is sucking the canoe ever eastward. You can feel the tug of history in the water here, and soon I pass along the land that was once Hanover-town. Back in the early 1700's this town, and another one just to the southeast, were two of the busiest ports in the Commonwealth.

Virtually all land in Central Virginia at that time was committed to tobacco farming. Tall ships made the journey up the Pamunkey to Newcastle and Hanover-town to un-

load their cargoes and then fill their holds with hogsheads of tobacco for the return trip to Mother England. The towns were heavily populated by the standards of the day, and brimmed with houses and warehouses and bustling docks.

Today, there's not a trace of either one of these towns. Deep water made it possible for ships to make their way this far inland. What drew the ships in were the tobacco farms, which is exactly what did the Pamunkey in, and what wrote the obituaries for both Colonial towns. Over the years, soil from the farms washed into the Pamunkey, silting it in. The depth was then so shallow no ship could make the passage. And so the towns that had once flourished on its banks now withered with the depleted topsoil.

Downriver, just below Mechanicsville Turnpike, I pad-dle over to a landing at Broaddus Flats. This was the site of Newcastle Town. A week before I had taken my daughter Catherine Rose here to interview the owner of this land, Frances Broaddus-Crutchfield. She is a good steward of land and river, and has been embroiled in a battle with Hanover County for years now, a battle which the county seems to have won. Even as we spoke on a sweltering Sunday afternoon in July the county pumped waste water effluent into the river from the Broaddus land.

What will eventually happen to the river is anyone's guess. But some have already noticed a decrease in the number of bass in the area below Broaddus Flats.

Just below Broaddus Flats the river widens. Here the tide rises and falls three feet. I ride with the outgoing tide and am clipping along at about four knots. There are vast swamps on both shores and the water covered with pickerel weed and spatterdock.

At my take out point in New Kent, I consider the Pamunkey tribe. True stewards of their namesake river, way back in 1918, the Pamunkeys, who had noticed a sharp decline in the shad population, created a fish hatchery. It was part of their cultural psyche, giving back more than they had taken.

I wasn't able to take my son for a sampling of the Pamunkey, he's still pretty young, four years old, and doesn't swim a lick. But one afternoon after my trip we watched storm clouds scuttle in from the

west carrying with them a long-over-due, liquid promise. We walked through the rain. Alongside our house Charles spotted the canoe lashed to the roof of my Volvo wagon.

"What's that?" he asked.

"It's a canoe."

He looked perplexed.

"A boat," I said.

"A boat on the water, Daddy?"

"That's right."

We waded in the stream that flowed along the gutter. I could feel sand and grit beneath my feet and the tug of a small current. The rain fell steadily and the water rose to well above my ankles.


I lifted Charles onto the sidewalk and told him to wait. He began stomping his feet in a puddle, splashing himself. A moment later, I was gently tugging the bitter ends of slippery reef knots and the nylon lines, like magic, with that single pull, came free. I found the center of the canoe, slid it off the luggage rack and carried it toward the gutter like a hermit crab lugging its own home. There was enough water in the gutter to float the canoe. Charles watched me then stated the impossible, "Daddy, I want to hold you." Which means just the opposite.

I carried him to the canoe, climbed over the gunwale, settled into the seat aft and nestled Charles between my legs. The canoe began to move with both of us aboard. It moved slowly, but Charles was aware of the motion.

"We're going," he said.

"We're canoeing."

"I'm on the boat," said Charles.

We continued to explore that mysterious river, all seventy-five feet of it, until we came to the corner and ran aground near the sewer intake. And then we did it again and again, until the rain stopped and the river ran dry. 



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DIVERSIONS

Culinary Road Trip Through Charlottesville

Be Sure to Pack a Cooler

by FAYERUZ REGAN

AS WE WOUND UP the mountaintop, we reached the monastery just in time to meet the sisters. They sold us the creamiest wheel of gouda I've ever had. Charlottesville is widely regarded as Virginia's wine country, but what's lesser known is that the region is positively studded with culinary gems, all worth the drive.

Some stops are leisurely, where you can enjoy a meal by a roaring fire. Other places sell must-have products that will bring joy to your meals. Below, I've listed the must-stop places. Come hungry and pack a cooler.

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS MONASTERY

For over 30 years, these nuns have perfected the art of making Gouda cheese with milk from grass-fed cows. Using old world techniques from the Netherlands, the result is buttery and delectable. Their Gouda is sold daily from 2 till 4 pm, except on Sundays. Part of the excitement is getting there, with a winding mountain road offering sweeping views... without a guardrail.

Olamonsastery.org - 3365 Monastery Drive Crozet, VA 22932-2116 - (434) 823-1452

GREENWOOD GROCERY

This destination location has been lauded in Southern Living, among other publications. Imagine a rustic cabin surrounded by pottery, statuary, and outdoor living oddities. Then upon entering, a sprawling selection of local wines and international foods sits on vintage wooden shelves and wicker baskets. View the old-fashioned candies and pour yourself a fresh cup of coffee, which is still only a dollar. Best of all, Greenwood Grocery makes fresh sandwiches and sides on-site. The Melrose is to die for: Homemade

pimiento cheese, roasted portabella mushrooms and grilled onions on country bread so buttery and toasty, I can still hear the crunch.

Greenwoodva.shop - 6701 Rockfish Gap Turnpike, Crozet, VA 22932 - (540) 456-6431

PIPPIN HILL WINERY

There is no shortage of options in Virginia's wine country, but Pippin Hill is a standout. They have no ordinary tasting room, but a tasting room that offers pairings with gourmet cuisine. Much of their produce is supplied by their farm, making it a true farm-to-table experience. But most of all, the wine is delectable. Stock up on their merlot.

Pippinhillfarm.com - 5022 Plank Rd North Garden, Virginia 22959 - (434) 202-8063

DR. HO'S HUMBLE PIE

Two minutes down the road from Pippin Hill is Dr. Ho's Humble Pie. Their homemade ranch dressing became so popular, that they now sell mason jars of it. Grab the largest size - you'll regret it if you don't. It's creamy, herbal, and tastes as if there's a hint of Parmesan. And if Dr. Ho's happens to have their pots de crème packaged to go, grab one of those too. Make room in your cooler for the ranch, but don't postpone joy on those pots de crème. They are so rich and chocolatey, you'll eat it with your eyes closed. And if you happen to be hungry, this hippie-themed hangout is known for "alternative" pizzas and myriad munchies in between.

www.drhoshumblepie.com - (434) 245-0000 - 4916 Plank Rd, North Garden, VA 22920

BASIC NECESSITIES

Basic Necessities sounds like a place to grab eggs or paper towels, but the reality is far from it. This quaint cottage with a country garden is a gourmet shop, filled with wine and



cheese. And if you step into the back, an offbeat cafe awaits, with wrap-around windows, a roaring fireplace, and curated art. Settle in for the type of cozy experience that allows you to live in the moment. It's a feast for the eyes. When we ordered brunch, we were all surprised with an amuse-bouche of poached fruit with cinnamon granola and fresh cream. The food is locally-sourced, often organic, and you always seem to smell roasted garlic and baked bread upon entering. On your way out, stock up on local cheese and a bottle or two of wine.

basicnecessities.us - 2226 Rockfish Valley Highway Nellysford, VA 22958 (434)361-1766

By this time, your cooler is filled to the brim, and wine bottles are clanging. This is the sound of a successful hunt. One may not consider this road trip a hunt with me pointing the way, but you never know what you'll find at these locally-owned businesses. It depends on what's in season, what's just been corked, what mood the chef was in.

Either way, when you get home and unpack your haul, you're infusing new flavors into your kitchen, and a little vitality into your life.

Bon appetit. 🍷

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The Old Bellevue Theatre Is About To Get a New Life

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

THE LONG-NEGLECTED-Samis Grotto, sandwiched between Dot's Back Inn and Zorba's Pizza Express in the commercial heart of Bellevue, is about to get a long-overdue renovation thanks to a joint effort by Alex Griffith and Ben Adamson who purchased the property for \$300,000 back in mid-January. The pair plan to breathe new life into this important architectural remnant of the 1930s, a structure that has been in a state of physical decline for years.

"The ceiling's kind of falling in," said Ben Adamson, owner of Corinthian Construction. "Every time you walk in, there's another huge chunk of plaster on the floor. And it's kind of a disaster of wet moldiness."

All that is about to change. Ben and his business partner in this venture, Alex Griffith, recently hired Bruce Shirley as architect for the project. Bruce is a Bellevue resident. "I've worked with Bruce for fifteen years," Ben tells me. "And he is committed to the neighborhood, and all of us want to do what's good for the building and what's good for the neighborhood."

To that end, the developers plan a "full-gut remodel" for the old theatre. "We're going to have to upgrade all the facilities there," Ben says. "We're going to do a new roof, a

whole new electrical service. We'll likely need to do an upgraded water service, an upgraded sewer line; and then we're going to have to add sprinklers to the whole building."

The price tag for these improvements will be about \$1.2 million.

Ben and Alex plan to utilize all three stories of the building.

"We will preserve the exterior shell," says Ben. "And the plan is, in the back area where the theater is, we will add two floors. We'll be adding a lot of square footage by doing that."

"The whole first floor (between 3,000 and 4,000 square feet) will be a commercial place," Ben says. That commercial space could be divided for two tenants, or rented to a single user.

The top two floors will accommodate a total of ten apartments. "They're going to be for more of a mature audience, not the micro one-bedrooms you see in Scott's Addition," says Ben. "Most will be one-bedroom, but if we can, we will squeeze a couple of two bedrooms in with two full baths."

As everyone familiar with MacArthur knows parking is scarce on the commercial strip. Ben says he and his business partner will lease some parking spaces on adjacent privately owned properties, if necessary. "We will do whatever is required



Bellevue Theatre after it became home to the New Dominion Dance Barn.

from zoning," he says.

Their plans also call for a complete restoration of the building's front elevation, returning this unique Art Deco movie house to its former glory. With a simple brick facade and sandstone highlights, it is an essay in stripped-down classicism.

The Bellevue has a long and storied past. It opened with the screening of "Mountain Music" in the late summer of 1937 when MacArthur Avenue was still called Rappahannock Avenue. The architect was Henry Carl Messerschmidt, who also designed the Lee Theater on West Grace Street in the Fan District.

As the story goes, Shirley MacLaine and her younger brother Warren Beatty saw their first motion picture at The Bellevue, which was just a couple short blocks from their American Foursquare home in the 3900 block of Fauquier Avenue. After watching that first movie there, the young Shirley MacLaine supposedly decided to become an actress.

For a couple decades it was a popular neighborhood movie theater, and then in the late 1950s it became home to another form of entertainment altogether. For a number

of years, Virginia's version of the Grand Ole Opry was broadcast live from The Bellevue. After Sunshine Sue retired as host of the Old Dominion Barn Dance in 1957, the show was renamed the New Dominion Barn Dance and its home was moved from the Lyric Theater in downtown Richmond to The Bellevue in the Northside. Among those who performed on its stage were Buck Owens, Porter Wagner, Ernest Tubbs, Hank Williams, Jr., Johnny Cash, June Carter, and a very young Willie Nelson.

The Bellevue Theatre closed in 1965, and a year later, at a cost of a little over \$26,000, Samis Grotto purchased the old theatre.

Now it is about to enter a new phase of its existence thanks to a pair of developers who have a vision that both preserves and improves. "I've got a lot of confidence in the neighborhood," Ben Adamson says. "We're excited to see how it all pans out." **NB**



Bellevue Theatre shortly after it first opened.

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ART REVIEW

Frederick Douglass Comes To Life at the VMFA

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

SAAC JULIEN'S "LESSONS

of the Hour—Frederick Douglass”, now at the VMFA, could not have arrived at a more opportune moment.

Consider the revisionist history Virginia’s current superintendent of public education is foisting on our youth. Of the 400-page standards document she presented, here’s what Dr. James J. Fedderman, president of the Virginia Education Association, had to say: “The standards are full of overt political bias, outdated language to describe enslaved people and American Indians, highly subjective framing of American moralism and conservative ideals, coded racist overtures throughout, requirements for teachers to present histories of discrimination and racism as ‘balanced’ ‘without personal or political bias’, and restrictions on allowance of ‘teacher-created curriculum’, which is allowed in all other subject areas.”

In a word, it’s a whitewash.

This sort of doctored history is what prevents us from learning from our past. After all, history is not simply about our progress as a nation; it is also about the hideous crimes of our past—things like the genocide of native people, and the enslavement of Africans and their descendants. Ignoring these sins against humanity makes it easier for us to repeat them. Every teacher in Virginia ought to take every student in the Commonwealth to see this inspired installment, a perfect antidote to the watered down version of history the state is trying to ram down the throats of our young.

Sir Isaac Julien, a London-born artist and auteur, created this captivating installation which features a total of ten flat screen TVs—from the fairly small to the extremely large. For a full 25 minutes the viewer is bombarded with images and sounds that bring to life this man Frederick Douglass who was as much a Founding



Father as Thomas Jefferson.


Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery to become one of the greatest orators and political writers this country has ever produced. He was a vocal activist for abolition and women’s suffrage, and would become the most photographed human being of the 19th century.

Frederick Douglass is portrayed by Ray Fearon in fragmented montage-like scenes that are woven together with spoken words and still images, along with modern film clips that illustrate the ongoing struggles for racial equity in this country. It is a dizzying and spell-binding array of words and images that penetrate the densest of skulls to tell the true history of our Republic.

A little over 1,800 years ago the great Greek writer Lucian penned the following about the qualities necessary for a good historian: “He must be fearless, uncorrupted, free, the friend of truth and of liberty. A just judge, a stranger to all, of no country, bound only by his own laws, acknowledging no sovereign, never considering what this or that man may say of him, but relating faithfully everything as it happened.”

Meaning the good, the bad, and downright ugly. You know, things like slavery, and the persistence of racism in the very structure of our society—something like a state-sanctioned history that denies our darkest moments when we failed to uphold the promises of our democracy.

This free exhibit runs through July 9.

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JOBIE ARTHUR A MODERN TROUBADOR

THE WEDDING BAND HAD JUST FINISHED THEIR

set and were headed over to the bar for some refreshments. Their instruments stood like small sculptures on the makeshift stage, and a little girl stared at them for a moment, then climbed up on the stage. She clasped a microphone with her tiny fingers and without any musical accompaniment sang a song she had committed to memory thanks to her grandma who had sung it to her every night for as long as the girl could remember. She sang one verse and as soon as she finished it the people sitting at the tables in front of her applauded, and the girl smiled. She was just four years old and her name was Josie Arthur. She moved into her grandmother's lap who sat at a table near the stage. Her grandmother hugged her.



That was the very first time Josie Arthur (JOBIE) ever performed in front of an audience. When she tells me this, I ask if she would mind singing it now. JOBIE nods and sings one verse in a perfect a cappella rendition, and by the time she finishes, with the words “Please don’t take my sunshine away,” there are tears in her eyes.

When I ask if she’s okay, JOBIE nods. “It makes me sad to sing it still,” she says. “I just think about my grandma whenever I sing it, so I don’t sing it anymore. I was seven when she died very young of lung cancer. It was just a sad moment in my life. She really was a constant

loving presence in my life, so when she was gone I felt that absence. She was like a third parent.”

For many weekend nights during her early years, it was JOBIE’S grandmother who would lay her down to sleep. “My parents would be having gigs on the weekends so she was like my babysitter,” JOBIE says. “And and she would sing ‘You Are My Sunshine’ and I would al-

ways cry because I thought the song was sad for some reason.” And now there are tears in my eyes, too.

Music has always had a profound effect on JOBIE. “It emotionally moved me,” she says. “I’ve been moved by music since I was really, really young. I would hear songs on the radio and things about heartbreak and stuff.”

At age five while in the car with her mother “Teardrops on My Guitar”

by Taylor Swift came up on the radio. As JOBIE listened to the words and absorbed the melody, she began crying. Her mother looked in the rear view mirror at her daughter strapped in her car seat.

“Are you having heartbreak, Josie?” she asked.

JOBIE shook her head. “No, it just moved me,” she told her mother.

That ability to respond to music became a driving force in JOBIE’S decision to become a singer songwriter. “I think that that is probably one of my motivating factors for writing music,” she says. “I like to write things that are emotionally hard to feel,” she says. “I like to write things that are cathartic for me, and then they kind of turn out to be cathartic for other people, too.”

When the vessel that would become JOBIE was filled, what poured into it was an exceptional cocktail of genes. JOBIE’S parents, Sara and Charles, are immensely talented musicians. Sara has a voice like no other, and Charles could coax music out of cucumber. He is as versatile as any musician I have ever met, and the tunes he makes seem to drop out of the thin air.

Of her mother’s voice, JOBIE says, “She has a really soulful, very pretty, but strong voice. I don’t really know how to describe it in the best way. She usually sings kind of jazz stuff, but she’ll also sing Patsy Cline type of stuff.”

And her father’s musical gifts are matchless. “Except for horns,” she says, “he can play everything else.”

JOBIE realizes her unique good fortune in having the parents she has. “I mean I feel really lucky,” she says. “My parents didn’t make a ton of money. They worked in the local music industry in Richmond. I grew up rich in culture and an artistic drive, but I didn’t grow up with a ton of connections nationwide or anything like that.” She pauses for a moment and then says, “I don’t know if I would have been doing this if I didn’t have everything at my disposal like my dad’s instruments. He had so many instruments that

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN

PHOTOS BY REBECCA D’ANGELO



I could just pick up and play any time, as long as I asked him.”

And JOBIE is the mirror image of her mother. “Genetically I inherited a lot of her traits,” she says of her mom. “I don’t think our personalities are super similar, but physically we share a lot. We have shared a similar path due to our physical things. She was taller than everyone growing up, I was also taller than everyone in my class. Our faces are similar, our torsos are similar, and we can both sing.”

When she was young, JOSIE would often watch her parents perform together at venues throughout the Richmond area, places like Ashland Coffee and Tea. “I loved the idea of performing ever since I was very young because I think I saw my parents doing it,” says JOBIE. “And when they were doing it then suddenly I wasn’t the center of their attention and I wasn’t the center of

their world anymore. So I think maybe as a response to that I have to be performing. I was never really afraid to be on stage, never really had stage fright.”

It was at Holton Elementary, then under the loving guidance of Principal David Hudson, that JOBIE really took to the stage. For one thing, she had excellent teachers there who saw her talent and nurtured it. “Miss Turnage was a great drama teacher and I had so much fun with her,” she remembers. “I was in choir with Mr. Clarke. He was so nice and I loved singing in that class. I have good memories of singing there and then being in choir.”

And over the years she would perform in the fall, winter and spring musicals produced at Holton. She recalls one musical with an environmental theme called Santa Goes Green. “That was the first

time I had a solo and I remember a lot of people telling me I was a really good singer after that,” says JOBIE.

In the fifth grade, not long before graduation, JOBIE played the Wizard of Oz in the school’s interpretation of *The Wiz*. She had one song, and she nailed it. But for JOBIE it was never really about the theatrics. “I did it all so I could start singing,” she says. “That’s why I got into doing theater, because I liked to sing.”

Throughout elementary school JOBIE’s parents urged her to take classes at SPARC (School of the Performing Arts in the Richmond Community), but their daughter wasn’t interested. In middle school that changed. She attended the IB program at Lucille Brown Middle School where there was no theater program at all. “That’s when I decided I wanted to go to SPARC,” JOBIE says. “Till my junior year of high school I was with them. And after my sophomore year, during the summer, I started working there as an assistant to one of the marketing people in the office.”

“I loved learning the harmonies and singing them,” she says. “I learned a lot about music from just sort of doing choral type musical theater music.” While at SPARC, she performed in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Music Man* and *Tarzan*, among other productions. “And I was really serious about musical theater,” she adds. “I wanted to be a dancer, singer, actor. I saw myself doing eight shows a week on Broadway or acting with a touring show. That was my goal.”

At Appomattox Regional Governor’s School, JOBIE honed her skills. She also attended summer programs at the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, home of the Blackfriars Playhouse. “It was an awesome place,” she says. “That was probably the most fun I’ve ever had acting.” While there she had roles in Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* and *The Roaring Girl* by Dekker and Middleton. She also played Regan in a scene from *King Lear*.

As college approached, JOBIE decided to study musical theater and began sending out early applications. “I had to send in pre-screens,” she says. “And most of them rejected me for musical theater.” So she changed course. “I was like, ‘Okay well I think I should just be an actor then. Maybe I’m really good at acting, maybe acting is what I want to do.’”

So she applied to Emerson College in Boston and was accepted into their acting school. That was about the time Covid struck. “I started at Emerson in fall of 2020,” says JOBIE. “Fifty percent of the classes were on zoom and fifty percent we would go into classrooms and be socially distanced. The acting classes there are great. The teachers that I had for voice and movement were really nice people, they were the best acting teachers that I had ever had.”

While attending classes at Emerson, JOBIE was also writing songs. She produced a load of them and during winter break she spent hours down in the basement where her father has a sort of recording studio. “My dad has all this equipment in his basement,” JOBIE says. “Sometimes he records stuff for himself. So I had all these songs and I was like, ‘We should record them.’ So we started recording, and I started producing these songs and I would get him to play on them.”

The first song she recorded was *Scorpio* which has now gotten more than 18,000 hits on Spotify. “I recorded four songs including *Halfway* and *Simple Man*,” says JOBIE. “This was with my dad in the basement and I sort of was like, ‘Oh can you play the cello on this?’ Or, ‘Can you play drums on this or bass?’ And then I would go and do harmonies and mix it that way and then my dad mastered it and then I put that out on streaming in April 2021.”

At this point in the interview, JOBIE grabs her guitar and begins playing and singing *Scorpio*. It is a wonder to behold this young woman who created this song from



The Arthur family on their front porch.

nothing, playing it now and singing the words she crafted. Her voice has a timeless quality and it haunts your soul long after the song is finished. And her voice seems to shift effortlessly from mezzo-soprano to contralto.

JOSIE made her very first song when she was just a preschooler. “My dad has a recording somewhere of me when I was like four or five singing in his basement this song about kissing somebody,” she says. “I was four and I had never kissed anybody, but I wrote songs and would sing them in my head.”

Her influences were many, from classic rock to folk. “I heard the melodies and the moments in the song that were big, and the moments that were small,” JOBIE says. “And I could hear a lot of the time what they were saying, what they were talking about.”

She listened to a lot of ‘The Beatles’ work. “I always resonated with Paul McCartney’s songwriting style,” she says. “I think Yesterday is a really great song.” And she remembers one Yusuf/Cat Stevens song from his Tea for the Tillerman album. “It’s called Don’t Be Shy, and that song makes me cry,” she says. There was also Tom Petty.

“My dad would play a lot of Tom Petty,” JOBIE says. “In second grade he was driving me to school one morning and we were listening to ‘I Won’t Back Down,’ and it made me so sad for some reason.”

She got out of the car and went to class and later that day during recess she left her water bottle outside. She couldn’t find the water bottle and began thinking of this container as a living creature. “I couldn’t stop picturing my water bottle in the middle of a field somewhere being sad, and that song, ‘I Won’t Back Down,’ wouldn’t stop playing in my head. I was sad about the water bottle and the song. And so I had to go home because I was so upset about the song and the water bottle.”

One morning as she showered a song popped into her head and she later strummed it out on a ukulele. It was called Puzzles, and it was about a friend and his girlfriend. She sings a verse of it now. “I don’t have a problem, You can never solve the puzzles in my head, You can never change me, I do not need therapy for puzzles in my head, puzzles my head.”

When she sang it for her parents they were blown away. “My parents

said, ‘This is really good,’” JOBIE remembers. “I was about fifteen at the time. So I kept writing songs about things going on in my life. I would do it for fun, on the side, all throughout high school.

In high school JOBIE was a member of an a cappella group. Even though she had a very good voice, she could not compete with some of the other vocalists. “I don’t have this powerhouse voice,” she says. “I knew that I couldn’t sing like Beyonce or Adele. I didn’t have a big voice that had a lot of control. I knew my voice by itself was good but it could never be show-stopping the way that I wanted it to be.”

JOBIE began listening to a singer who had a voice more like her own, a singer songwriter who was developing a strong fan base. “I heard Phoebe Bridger’s album Stranger in the Alps and I love that kind of music, that kind of folk and acoustic music that is also really sad and moody,” says JOBIE. “I thought people like her music and I can write songs like that and I can sing like that. I used to think when I was a little kid that I wanted to be a singer and I was always trying to write songs. So why not do it.”

On a biting cold January night in the secluded compound of house

and outbuildings on a small rural tract near Reedy Creek on Southside, JOBIE held a release party for her album which contains eight tracks. It was a remarkable evening and the culmination of months of hard work.

The album’s title is Grendel, but it is not in reference to the monster as portrayed in Beowulf. It is more about the monster’s point of view as captured in John Gardner’s breakthrough novel Grendel.

“I like the perspective of an animal or a monster seeing the humans and how they are acting in a primitive way,” JOBIE tells me. “There’s this whole societal role that he can’t fit into and there’s nothing he can do about it. He sees inside and there’s nothing he could do to fit in and he has to understand that.”

Which begs the question, who are the real monsters?

“I wouldn’t go so far to say that it’s human beings as I would say it’s industrialization and greed and white supremacy,” says JOBIE. “In the Americas the native people were living extremely sustainable lives, they were living in harmony with the earth. And I think that capitalism and industrialization is the real enemy, and that’s what killing the planet, and when the planet is suffering like this disenfranchised people, poor people are the people that get affected the most.”

“A lot of my songs come from a place of disillusionment and sometimes unhappiness or anger,” says Josie. “I think a lot of time somebody will be rude to me, or somebody will hurt me, or double cross me, and then I’ll write in reaction to that. I talk about my struggles socially with people, and how I’ve experienced that growing up, and that’s the main theme of the song I named the album after.”

That cut is now called To This Day (Grendel) on her album.

More often than not, great artists live in a realm that often seems isolated, for they see and feel things

that many people are either incapable of experiencing or too frightened to acknowledge.

“I always as a kid felt like an outsider or I felt different from other kids when I was growing up,” says JOSIE. “Sometimes I still feel different from other people my age. And since nobody is like anybody else then we should use our own gifts to help everyone else.”

JOSIE’s gift is a singular way of expressing her deepest emotions through song. She is a bard; she is a troubadour.

“I’m putting into words feelings that everybody’s probably felt in their own particular way,” she says. “One of my songs on the album is about trying to stick with somebody who doesn’t like me, or isn’t putting in the same effort. And it’s sort of self-sabotaging staying in that relationship. A lot of people go through that where they are with people that are wrong for them, or with people that are not treating

them right, but not everybody can put it into words how that makes them feel with poetry. So that’s what I do. And I think when people listen to that they’re like, I felt that way before and that’s really cathartic for me to hear that.”

The song she was speaking about is called All Is Well, and JOSIE recites her favorite lyrics from the piece. “I’m a sorry dancer with the moon in cancer, And you’ve gotten under my skin and all the ghosts are gone now, They’ve got up and walked out but I’m still dancing.”

She mentions her own depression and a recent conversation with her mother. “I realize the way the world is set up and it makes me real angry every day, and makes me sometimes not want to get out of bed in the morning,” JOBIE says. “I was talking to my mom about this and she was obviously sad that I was sad. She said throughout history there has been human suffering. But I said, ‘We have the technology where we could make everything

sustainable, and we could redistribute wealth.”

And then she speaks an indisputable truth. “Why is everyone so depressed? That’s the natural reaction to the way the world is right now. If you’re not depressed, you’re not getting what’s going on. Or you’re extremely privileged and dumb. I think it’s good to have that response. If we sweep that depression aside then we don’t help.”

JOSIE’S words and melodies are a sovereign remedy for what ails our collective psyche. She does what all great poets and songwriters have always done, she shines light on painful truths and collectively we listeners feel not so alone and are often inspired to the point of dramatic change.

She remembers the night of her album release celebration. After her performance, people from the audience approached her and told her how her songs resonated with them. “We are all kind of trapped

and we’re all kind of isolated and there’s nothing you can do about it,” Josie Arthur tells me. “I realized that I was ultimately not alone when people were telling me how they felt about the songs. I could put that into words about feeling alone, about feeling different from other people. I have these issues and these feelings and they’re not unique feelings necessarily. But I see them in a unique way and I can articulate them in a unique way. And people can share that together and I think that is what art is all about.”

To listen to Grendel by JOBIE visit Spotify. <https://open.spotify.com/>

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The Mill on MacArthur to Close New Restaurant Opening There Soon

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

ON FEBRUARY 26 The Mill on MacArthur served up its last meal. But in fairly short order another restaurant, which will maintain the quality of The Mill and its commitment to the community, will open in its place. The new owners, seasoned restaurateurs, are Northsiders. What's more, most of the staff from The Mill will be working at the new restaurant. And over the years, all of these folks—Amy, Omar, Carrie Jamie, and so many others—have become like extended family to many a Northsider.

Amy Foxworthy, who with Josh Carlton and Chip Zimmerman, opened the Mill over a decade ago says they chose to sell the restaurant because it was time. “We wanted to do something different, but it is bittersweet,” Amy says. “The customers, community and our neighbors have been fantastic, and business has been really good. We bounced back from the pandemic, especially in the last six months. It's been probably the closest to normal it's been in years. We have a great staff right

now. Everyone working with us is so good at what they do.”

Which has always been the case. From the very get-go the food has been outstanding and the service impeccable. My kids grew up with The Mill. We ate there for the first time a week after they opened, and over the years have eaten there scores of times and have never had a bad experience or a meal that was anything less than extraordinary. We celebrated milestones there with family and friends—graduation from elementary school and high school, my daughter's Confirmation—and were always treated as if we had stepped into someone's family dining room.

Amy and her business partners signed the lease on February 4 twelve years ago, and the place needed a complete renovation. So the very next day Josh began ripping out the acoustic ceiling tiles to expose the ornamental tin beneath it, and six weeks of sweat and toil later they were open for business.

“We are a neighborhood spot, there's no question about it,” Josh had told me not long after they first opened. “We cater to the neighborhood. My family and I try to eat a little bit healthier than everything being fried



Josh Carlton and Amy Foxworthy about a year after they first opened The Mill on MacArthur.

or frozen out of a box. And Amy is a vegetarian so we added a lot of vegetarian dishes to the menu. We wanted something more geared toward our lifestyle and what we were looking to feed our children and ourselves.”

Amy then said this, “As soon as we opened the trend toward gluten-free started so we've tried to adapt. And Josh has done a great job trying to find alternatives to cater to those people. Everything is indicated on the menu. So if you have anything that you can substitute, whether it's non-dairy or gluten-free or vegan, it's always indicated on the menu.”

God is in the details. And the details of any fine meal are its ingredients. From the moment the first entree was prepared, The Mill used only the freshest and locally sourced ingredients available, from single-source, grass fed Virginia black Angus beef to Edward's country ham out of Surry. That aspect of the business always appealed to Amy, for she understands that a healthy economy is one that is locally based. “You're dealing with a family and they deliver directly to us,” she told me eleven years ago. “It's nice when you can reach out to people who are trying

to generate that local business; they actually help other smaller providers in their neighborhood as well.”

And those many years ago Josh said something about The Mill that is just as true today as it was back then. “We've always stressed being as friendly as we possibly can because the people we serve are our neighbors,” he had said “And even if Amy's not here or I'm not here we need to be represented by people that we can trust and we need to know that they're treating our customers the way we want them to be treated. We get a lot of compliments from people about our servers.”

“And our food,” Amy had added.

Now Amy tells me this about the new owners who will change the name: “We sold them everything that makes the business run. We believe they're going to do a good job, and they have the best interest of the community in mind. Which is why we think it's a good fit.”

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Policing the U.S.

by JACK R. JOHNSON

LIKE A NUMBER OF

recent high-profile cases of police brutality, the fatal encounter between Tyre Nichols and the Memphis, Tennessee police's Scorpion unit began with what appeared to be a minor traffic infraction. Police brought the full force of the state against an individual whose sole crime appears to have been 'driving recklessly.' His family said that the police beat him so severely that he was unrecognizable.

Years ago, after a similar incident with the Michael Brown killing in Ferguson, Missouri, Governor Jay Nixon signed a broad municipal court reform bill. "Under this bill, cops will stop being revenue agents and go back to being cops," But what does that mean, exactly? Was there a before time in which cops were simply 'peace' officers, like the classic Bobby from London streets?

There are two narratives of how policing historically developed in the United States. Both are true.

In the first narrative, American cities copied English systems put in place overseas in the early 19th century. In 1829, London there was a great deal of labor unrest. After years of suppressing Catholic rebellions in Ireland, Robert 'Bobby' Peel, the Irish Secretary persuaded Parliament to establish a Metropolitan Police force of some three thousand men, headed by two civilian justices (later called "commissioners"). They were organized like an army with each superintendent overseeing four inspectors, sixteen sergeants, and a hundred and sixty-five constables, who wore uniform coats and pants of blue with black top hats, each assigned a numbered badge and a baton. Londoners eponymously came to call these men "bobbies" after Bobby Peel. Boston and New York City followed that design a few years later.



The other narrative starts centuries earlier. In 1661, the English colony of Barbados passed its first slave law that pronounced "Negroes and other Slaves" were "wholly unqualified to be governed by the Laws... of our Nations," and devised, instead, a special set of rules "for the good Regulating and Ordering of them." In 1680, a few years after Bacon's Rebellion, Virginia adopted similar measures, known as slave codes. These were extensive laws that limited an enslaved persons activities in very particular ways. They couldn't carry weapons, they couldn't depart from their plantations without written approval, nor skip out on their work or be out after sun down. To enforce these codes, so called slave patrols were created and used throughout the slave holding Southern hemisphere. South Carolina, founded by slave owners from Barbados, authorized its first slave patrol in 1702; Virginia followed in 1726, North Carolina in 1753.

The patrollers (think patrol officers), sometimes called paddy, carried lethal weapons, whips and chains, and used dogs to track their prey.

What these narratives held in common was a militarized outlook for their vocation, something August Vollmer formalized in 1909. August Vollmer, first police chief of Berkeley, California, and the so-called 'father of modern policing' had served with the Eighth Army Corps in the Philippines in 1898. "For years, ever since Spanish-American War days, I've studied military tactics and used them to good effect in rounding up crooks," he explained. "After all we're conducting a war, a war against the enemies of society." Who were these enemies? Vollmer studied eugenic theories. In one essay, he writes about what could be done to prevent "defectives from producing their kind," which he felt would reduce the crime rate. According to the New Yorker, his enemies were,

"Mobsters, bootleggers, socialist agitators, strikers, union organizers, immigrants, and Black people." Vollmer-era police enforced a new kind of slave code: Jim Crow laws, which had been passed in the South beginning in the late eighteen-seventies and upheld by the Supreme Court in 1896.

Public service, protecting individuals from harm to themselves or to others, might be a nice ancillary outcome of a police officer doing his job, but it's never been required. In a landmark decision *DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services*, the U.S. Supreme Court declared that "the Constitution does not impose a duty on the state and local governments to protect the citizens from criminal harm." The United States Supreme Court, in the 2005 case *Castle Rock v. Gonzales*, upheld that decision and extended it to include a state or municipality's police force—codi-

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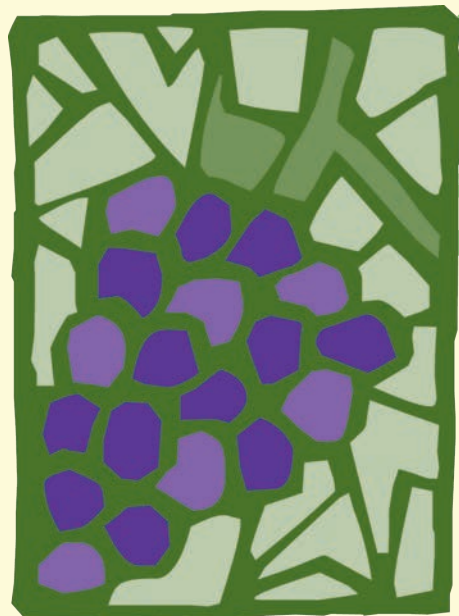
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fyng what many folks in poorer neighborhoods had long suspected.

Not only are the police not necessarily here to protect individual citizens, but in the performance of their duty they may be more concerned with protecting themselves. According to ex-Officer, Seth Stanton, writing in the Atlantic Magazine, Rookie officers are taught what is widely known as the “first rule of law enforcement”: An officer’s overriding goal every day is to go home at the end of their shift. One slogan that is bandied about squad rooms sums up the mind set: “Better to be judged by twelve than carried by six.”

This may be unique to the United States which has the most heavily armed citizenry in the world. Initially, the U.S. police forces imitated their European counterparts and carried no lethal weapons—with the exception of slave patrols-- but after the Civil War, police departments began arming themselves with hidden weapons (Colt made a special “Pocket Police” Model) and then wore them publicly. We have seen a comparable escalation in violence ever since. Seven years ago, when the Guardian counted police killings, it reported that, “in the first 24 days of 2015, police in the U.S. fatally shot more people than police did in England and Wales, combined, over the past 24 years.” Now American police are armed with more than seven billion dollars’ worth of surplus military equipment off-loaded by the Pentagon to eight thousand law-enforcement agencies since 1997. At the same time, they interact with the most heavily armed civilian population in the world.

Is it any wonder we don’t use the phrase ‘peace officer’ anymore? 🍷



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BOOK REVIEW

How Awe Transforms Us

by FRAN WITHROW

“A WE IS THE emotion we experience when we encounter vast mysteries that we don’t understand.”

So Dacher Keltner explains in his thoughtful book, “Awe,” which looks deeply at this emotion through the lens of science and shares how becoming aware of awe can change your life for the better.

Keltner and colleagues gathered stories of awe from people in twenty-six countries to find common denominators about our experiences with awe. He found that people consistently feel awe around moral beauty (courage, kindness, and strength). Nature, not surprisingly, also inspires awe, as well as does music, visual design, and life and death. Participants also found awe in epiphanies, those sudden insights that transform one’s thinking in an instant.

Awe can lead to spiritual awakening (inside or outside of traditional religions). It can slow us down, make us pause, allow us to realize just how amazing this life and this world (and the universe) are. Awe can make us more grateful, more caring, more content, and more curious.

The personal stories about people’s experiences of awe that pepper the book show how awe can transport us out of our ego and into connection with something bigger than ourselves. Becoming aware of how minuscule we are in comparison to the vastness of the Grand Canyon, for instance, leads to a “small self.” This “small self” allows us to collaborate with others, to experience humility, and to see that we are part of a community. Finding those connections helps us turn away from our perceived loneliness and isolation, so prevalent in today’s society, and turns us toward gratitude, compassion,

and empathy.

Keltner says that today it’s easy to turn a blind eye to everyday awe. We are more disconnected from others and more disconnected from nature. Thousands of years ago, indigenous people noticed awe every day. How can we reclaim that sense of wonder and inter-relatedness?

One way is to go for a walk. Studies show that being in nature is a great way to experience awe. That hawk in the air, the way branches of a tree spread across the sky, the song of a bluebird; all can lead to this sense of astonishment and amazement. Awe reminds us that we are all united, which leads to greater happiness in daily life. Dancing, especially in groups, gathering together at a concert or a game, watching a waterfall or trickling stream, witnessing the beginning or the end of life: all these inspire awe and are reminders that this world of ours is full of mysteries beyond our understanding.

If you are searching for a way to experience more peace, joy, and connection, this beautiful book will show you how, by looking for awe every day, even moment to moment. Being aware of awe can be a gift not only to yourself, but also to the world. Take a deep breath. Look around you for those enigmatic glimpses of wonder and amazement.

And may you be filled with awe by what you discover. **[N]**

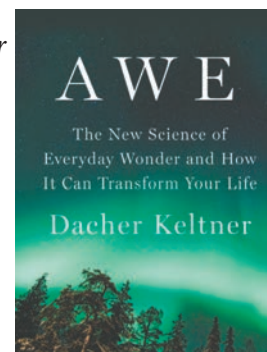
“Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life”

By Dacher Keltner

\$28.00

Penguin Press

336 pages



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