

Mistretta, Susan

From: Bill Baber <wsbabar@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 2:02 PM
To: City Council - All; Joyal, Michael; Breault, William
Subject: In support of the Mounted Patrol

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Dear Dover Leaders,

We have made Dover our home for nearly four decades and believe that there is much to be proud of in our community, including the quality and professionalism of our emergency services. This week the nation is questioning what has become of the American exceptionalism that has for so long has been the example of what a vibrant democracy can yield. We are fortunate in Dover to have a police chief who rose to the occasion to assure us that the Dover Police Department is committed to protecting the constitutional rights of everyone. Chief Brault, we salute you as an example of Dover exceptionalism.

Another example of the Dover Police's exceptionalism has for decades been those ever-so- approachable Mounted Patrol officers. They have literally become the public face of the city, appearing in virtually everything published by and about Dover. And why not? Just seeing them on patrol will bring a smile to your face and a little pride to your heart.

We understand the Mounted Patrol's principal mission has never been getting pictures published with children, the elderly, or ribbon cuttings at a new business. We have always thought that they provided a great service as an ear to hear the average person's concerns. And earfuls they have received, as it is impossible to meet them on the street without stopping to say hello. What a wonderful and accessible way to introduce children and young people to police officers in our community.

Before the pandemic, we walked downtown daily and had many opportunities to say hello to Officers Joe, Michelle, CJ, and Rasa. Over time we learned that not only were they hearing from those that approached them on the street. Their patrols also took them through the parks, backwoods, and other hidden spots where those without permanent dwellings gather or make camp. They haven't just visited them, they know them. They know their personal stories, their mental states, and their reliance on substances. They help them receive assistance. They have been there to help protect this vulnerable population and to protect others from them when needed.

Dover is not only a more photogenic place when graced by the Mounted Patrol, we are a safer and healthier place with their presence. We truly understand that these are the most difficult of times to ask for continuance of what might be seen as a luxury. However, strong volunteer, individual, and business support indicates the value to the community of having mounted officers, in addition to those in patrol cars. We hope that you will make every effort to maintain this highly-valued service to our community.

Bill and Kristine Baber
5 Gerry's Lane